

FS P&BC Report to APC (10/06/2023)
on Proposed new BS in Biochemistry (BSBioc) in AS

Overview (taken from Proposal, Budget, & LOI received from OAPA):

The proposed new 4-year undergraduate B.S. degree in Biochemistry is essentially a rebranding of the current Biochemistry Track in the current B.S. in Chemistry program within the College of Arts and Sciences. The new BS in Biochemistry academic plan will give students more options than available in the current B.S. Chemistry program. Course requirements will also be modified to meet American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) guidelines with the goal to establish a Biochemistry degree accredited by the ASBMB after the first graduated class. The standalone Biochemistry program will be more visible, distinctly marketable, and more attractive to students wanting a Biochemistry degree than the current Biochemistry track. This is a STEM+H degree with excellent growth potential. In a 2021 report by Gray & Associates for CPE, the recommendation for the Chemistry (B.S.) program was “fix to grow”. Specifically, it was noted to “consider the demand for “Biochemistry” and the lack of competition” and raised the question of a CIP code (26.0202) with additional investment in Biochemistry for growth potential.

Assessment:

The proposed budget includes addition of a part-time Lecturer who would teach two of the current Chemistry “service courses” to free up the existing Biochemistry specialty faculty for increased retention and enrollment in the new BS Biochemistry program. A new fulltime Faculty member would be added in the 4th year if enrollment projections are met to generate the revenue for support of the additional faculty.

The proposed new BS Biochemistry program only involves existing already-taught undergraduate courses and is aimed at increased retention of students in Chemistry who now leave for other programs. The proposed budget in the first year is based on increased retention of existing Biochemistry track students and added enrollment of 1 new major. The proposed budget growth in subsequent years is based on increased retention of 2 students per year and increased enrollment of 3 new majors per year. The proposed budget includes \$220,000 to update teaching lab equipment and to add new teaching lab instrumentation in Year 4 if enrollment projections are met.

This is a rebranding of an educational program which a third-party (Gray & Associates) has recommended to CPE. The FS P&BC concludes that there is very little financial risk to this new BS in Biochemistry proposal, and that this new program offers substantial growth potential even beyond what is fairly conservatively projected.

Comments:

FS P&BC has no financial issues to be clarified by the program proposers and recommends approval of the proposal by the FS APC for consideration by the full FS.

Pat

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